

**Hardwicke Planning Group - Review of Planning Application**

**S.18/2179/HEDGE Highway improvement scheme proposed at Cross Keys Roundabout to provide increased capacity at the roundabout by widening the circulatory and approaches. Widening on B4008 Southern Arm will require land acquisition for the construction of an embankment and the construction of a retaining wall. This coincides with the existing hedgerow**

1 The application is for the removal of two separate hedgerows to facilitate the Cross Keys Roundabout improvement scheme. Hardwicke Parish Council planning Group reviewed the application and supporting evidence as of 25th October 2018.

2 Hardwicke Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy ENV2 – Landscape states that ‘...Where possible new developments should seek to contribute to protect existing trees, **hedgerows** and other landscape features. Planting for new development should incorporate native trees and shrubs characteristic of the local area...’.

2.1 Hardwicke Parish Council will not support the removal of established hedgerows unless material considerations outweigh the benefits of retaining the hedgerow or for the wider benefit of the community.

3 The revised Cross Keys roundabout layout aims to facilitate the Hunts Grove development and mitigate the longstanding issue of excessive traffic queuing back onto the M5 junction 12.

3.1 The removal of the hedgerow on the B4008 Southern Arm is to facilitate widening of the road in this area. Whilst the hedgerow is a mature and valued part of its character Hardwicke Parish Council Planning Group reluctantly accepts that wider material considerations override those of the Hardwicke community.

4 The planning application states that ‘...*The hedge on the B4008 Eastern Arm blocks forward visibility on the B4008 at the approach to the roundabout...*’. The adjacent site has been cleared from a previous building ready for potential development in the future. Several applications have been rejected, restricted visibility of traffic from the Cross Keys roundabout being one of the reasons.

4.1 The hedgerow consists of two small trees and a few shrubs. Hardwicke Parish Council Planning Group considers the removal of the hedgerow to be of benefit to the community on the grounds of improved safety.

5 **For these reasons Hardwicke Parish Council supports the application.**